

Department of Art History and Archaeology

MA in Art History Program Graduate Student Handbook

2026-2027



**Columbia University
Art History and Archaeology
826 Schermerhorn Hall
1190 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10027**

Last update: September 1, 2026

Table of Contents

Preface	3
Requirements	4
Fields of Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Course Requirements	5
Thesis Requirements	6
Guidelines for the Thesis	7
Full-Time and Part-Time Structures of the Program	9
Language Requirement	12
Registration & Course Information	13
Registration Classifications	13
Advising	14
Course Registration Procedures	14
Academic Records	17
Course Categories	18
Grading Options	20
Resources	21
Departmental Resources	21
Miscellaneous Student Resources	22
University Resources	23
Appendix A: Part-time Graduate Work Guidelines	25
Appendix B: Teaching Assistant Positions	26

Preface

This handbook is intended to explain the requirements, registration procedures, and course information for the MA in Art History Program and inform students of resources available to them. However, it is not a substitute for the information provided on the website of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), which can be accessed at: <http://gsas.columbia.edu>

Where appropriate and useful, references to specific portions of this website or other Columbia websites are provided in this handbook.

Essential policies for the Columbia Community are available at:

<https://www.essential-policies.columbia.edu/>

International Student and Scholars Office:

<https://isso.columbia.edu>

Requirements

Fields of Study

The Department of Art History and Archaeology offers a free-standing MA in Art History in the following fields of study:

- Ancient Art and Archaeology
 - Greek
 - Roman
 - West Asian (Near Eastern)
- Art and Architecture of Africa and the African Diaspora (pre-20th century)
- Art and Architecture of the Americas until 1500 (“Pre-Columbian”)
- Arts and Architecture of the Lands of Islam
- East Asian Art and Archaeology (pre-20th century)
- History of Architecture
 - Ancient Architecture
 - Early Christian, Byzantine, Western Medieval Architecture
 - Renaissance and Baroque Architecture
 - Modern Architecture
- History of Western Art
 - Early Christian, Byzantine, Western Medieval Art
 - Renaissance and Baroque Art
 - Europe 1700-1900
 - US American Art (pre-20th century)
- Native North American Art (pre-20th century)
- South Asian Art (pre-20th century)

Students accepted in the Program are mentored by a faculty member in the proposed field of study.

Recipients of the free-standing MA in Art History degree will be considered for admission to the PhD Program only upon submission of a separate PhD application.

For the free-standing MA in Modern and Contemporary Art: Critical and Curatorial Studies (MODA), see <https://arthistory.columbia.edu/content/ma-modern-and-contemporary-art-critical-and-curatorial-studies-moda>

Course Requirements

Coursework

All students in the MA in Art History Program are required to accumulate 2 Residence Units (see *Registration Classifications* later in this handbook) and take a total of eight graduate courses plus two sections of the MA Thesis course. The breakdown is as follows:

- All students must take the MA Methods Colloquium in the fall semester.
- All students must take the Practices of Art History Colloquium in the spring semester.
- All students must take six courses at either the 8000-, 6000-, 5000- or 4000-level. Of these courses, no more than two should be taken for R-credit. Students who wish to take courses at the 2000-level must get the instructor's approval to take them at the 5000-level, either for a letter grade (which commonly involves additional course assignments) or for R-credit. Students may take up to two 2000-level courses at the 5000-level towards their course requirements, regardless of the grading option that they choose (letter grade or R-credit). 3000-level courses (undergraduate seminars) are generally closed to graduate students.
- All students must take two sections of the MA Thesis course during their final year in the Program.

Also note that:

- With the consent of their advisor, students may take courses in other departments relevant to their course of study.
- To ensure permission to continue in the MA Program, students are warned against the accumulation of Incompletes in their coursework.

Language Requirement

Reading knowledge of one foreign language relevant to the field of study must be demonstrated in order to complete the MA degree. For specific information on fulfilling the language requirement, see *Language Requirement* later in this handbook.

Distribution Requirement

While there are no formal distribution requirements in the MA in Art History Program, students are strongly encouraged to take during their coursework at least one course outside of their geographical and/or chronological field at the 4000-level or above.

Progress towards the Degree

In order to make academic progress towards the degree, students must remain in good academic standing, as defined by GSAS and the Department. As stated on the GSAS website (<https://www.gsas.columbia.edu/content/good-standing>), good academic standing for MA students includes but is not limited to:

- Maintaining a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0
- Holding no more than one mark of Incomplete at any given time
- Registering continuously
- Making consistent academic progress as designated by the department and GSAS
- Completing degree requirements while maintaining superior quality of work as determined by the department
- Maintaining consistent contact with the MA in Art History Program Director and GSAS
- Meeting other criteria specified by the department

Failure to maintain good academic standing may lead to a warning, academic probation, or dismissal. Students must familiarize themselves with all of the policies on the GSAS website, noted above, as well as departmental requirements.

Individual evaluation meetings with the MA in Art History Program Director are scheduled at the end of the first academic year.

Receiving Your Degree and Diploma

Students must complete the Degree Application form near the end of the semester prior to the one in which they expect to fulfill the requirements for the MA degree. Degree application deadlines and the Degree Application form are available at: <http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/application-degree-or-certificate>. The MA diploma can be picked up in 205 Kent Hall; it will be mailed to the address indicated on the Degree Application form if it is not picked up.

Thesis Requirements

Developing Your Thesis Topic

Students should begin formulating their thesis topic in the semester prior to the semester in which they intend to begin researching their thesis. The topic should be discussed with the intended advisor. During the summer or winter break (depending on the thesis start date), students should start working on their thesis proposal.

Thesis Proposal

The Masters Thesis Proposal form and actual thesis proposal are normally due during the first four weeks of classes in the semester in which students intend to begin their thesis. Students should contact their advisor to discuss their proposal well before it is due. The topic and advisor are approved only when a faculty member signs the form, thereby agreeing to be the advisor. The proposal and signed form must be submitted to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs on the designated deadline. The form is available on the Department's website at: <https://arthistory.columbia.edu/content/ma-art-history-handbook-planning-sheets-and-forms>

Guidelines for the Thesis

Content:

The MA thesis is a substantial piece of critical writing that develops an original argument about an important issue in art and art history. It should not just summarize existing literature on a topic, but make a new contribution to the literature through research and critical thinking. You may focus, for example, on an art work, a group of art works, an artist, an art movement, an art institution, an aesthetic idea/theory or historiography. It is better to write in depth on a relatively narrow topic than superficially on a broad topic. The thesis is distinct from a seminar paper; however, it may expand upon an existing seminar paper with the consent of the advisor. It should develop a topic in substantial depth, show a command of the existing literature, and be organized into chapters or sections that guide the reader through its argument. While exact length of the thesis is dependent upon the topic and selected methodology, as well as the requirements of the thesis advisor, the benchmark is about 40-80 pages of writing including footnotes (10,000-20,000 words), but excluding illustrations and bibliography.

Advisor:

Throughout the thesis year, students should meet regularly with their advisor to discuss their progress. The frequency of these meetings should be decided with the advisor. Students are responsible for scheduling them. (Note: If a student is working with a faculty member who has agreed to be their advisor but is on leave at some point during the process, students should arrange individually with them on how to keep in contact.) When appropriate, students may ask a faculty member from within or outside the Department (the latter with permission of the Director) to serve as a second reader. The second reader may offer initial suggestions at the proposal stage, but they generally do not assist in the research and writing process; their central role is to read and offer feedback on the final draft and confer with the faculty advisor on the final grade.

Schedule:

Generally speaking, students should aim to complete all research and begin writing during the first semester, and devote the second semester to completing the writing and revisions based upon advisor feedback. Students should set a date with their advisor for the submission of a complete rough draft of the thesis with plenty of time left for revision before the final draft is due. Students who do not arrange for a submitted draft early enough to allow appropriate time for advisor feedback and subsequent revisions risk not being able to graduate on time. It is the student's responsibility to be mindful of deadlines and time frames.

Final thesis:

The style of the thesis need not conform to the requirements of the Columbia University PhD dissertation office. A consistent and recognized format must be employed, however, especially with regard to citations and footnotes. Students are advised to employ such style as is standard for art history journals and seminar papers. Illustrations should be of excellent quality. Expectations vary between advisors; therefore, it is imperative that students discuss specific formal and organizational requirements with their advisor early in the writing process.

Submitting the Thesis

For graduation approval, all students must submit to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs a final bound copy of the thesis and the [MA Thesis Approval Cover Sheet](#) signed by the advisor by the due date as determined by the Department of Art History and Archaeology. Any thesis submitted without the signed Approval Cover Sheet will not be accepted and will not be considered successfully deposited. Any thesis submitted after the deadline may result in a delay in graduation.

Columbia's Academic Commons

Students who earn an A or A+ on their thesis have the option to submit their work to Columbia's Academic Commons. Please consult the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs for more details.

Full-Time and Part-Time Structures of the Program

Domestic Students:

• Full-time enrollment

Option 1

Semester 1 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 2 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 3 1 Extended Residence Unit	Semester 4 1 Extended Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research Lecture or Seminar (optional)	MA Thesis II: Writing Lecture or Seminar (optional)

Option 2

Semester 1 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 2 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 3 1 Extended Residence Unit	Semester 4 1 Extended Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar (optional)	MA Thesis II: Writing Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar (optional)

• **Part-time enrollment**

2-year option

Semester 1 0.5 Residence Unit	Semester 2 0.5 Residence Unit	Semester 3 0.5 Residence Unit	Semester 4 0.5 Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis II: Writing Lecture or Seminar

3-year option

Semester 1 0.5 Residence Unit (or 0.25 Residence Unit)	Semester 2 0.5 Residence Unit (or 0.25 Residence Unit)	Semester 3 0.25 Residence Unit (or 0.5 Residence Unit)	Semester 4 0.25 Residence Unit (or 0.5 Residence Unit)	Semester 5 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 6 0.25 Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research	MA Thesis II: Writing

4-year option

Semester 1 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 2 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 3 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 4 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 5 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 6 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 7 0.25 Residence Unit	Semester 8 0.25 Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar	Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research	MA Thesis II: Writing

International Students: Must be registered as full-time students throughout the MA Program

Option 1

Semester 1 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 2 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 3 1 Extended Residence Unit	Semester 4 1 Extended Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research Lecture or Seminar (optional)	MA Thesis II: Writing Lecture or Seminar (optional)

Option 2

Semester 1 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 2 1 Full-Time Residence Unit	Semester 3 1 Extended Residence Unit	Semester 4 1 Extended Residence Unit
<i>MA Methods Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	<i>Practices of Art History Colloquium</i> Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar	MA Thesis I: Research Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar (optional)	MA Thesis II: Writing Lecture or Seminar Lecture or Seminar (optional)

Language Requirement

All graduate programs in the Department of Art History and Archaeology require proficiency in languages relevant to the field of study. MA in Art History students must demonstrate reading proficiency in one foreign language and should consult with their advisor at the beginning of their first year to determine with which language they should fulfill the requirement.

Language Examinations

Language exams must be taken in the respective departments at Columbia University. These departments offer regularly scheduled language exams (schedules are available on the respective websites) and students are responsible for signing up for a language exam directly with the relevant department. Students should ensure that the language exam they sign up for will satisfy the language requirement for graduate students.

Language Examination Exception

For some languages, students' advisors may request that the exam be given within the Department of Art History and Archaeology. Students should therefore consult with their advisor beforehand.

Students may also fulfill the language requirement with one of the following options:

“Native Speaker” Language Exemption:

Students focusing on a field related to their native culture and whose native language is not English may be granted exemption from the language requirement by their advisor. If granted exemption, students must submit a signed Language Exemption form to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs. The form is available on the Department's website at:

<https://arthistory.columbia.edu/content/ma-art-history-handbook-planning-sheets-and-forms>

Language Courses:

Some language departments offer Rapid Reading and Translation or Accelerated Reading courses. These courses focus more on translation, as opposed to speaking, listening, and writing. Practices vary by language department, but students must earn an A-grade (A-, A, or A+) in these courses to count towards the degree requirements. If a student earns a lower grade, the student must take the language department's proficiency exam. Please consult the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs for more details.

In lieu of a proficiency exam, students can also take language courses to fulfill their language requirement. Students must successfully earn a passing letter grade (C or above) at the Intermediate II level to demonstrate proficiency.

Please note that language courses do not count towards MA coursework.

Summer Language Courses in Paris or Venice:

A passing letter grade in summer intensive courses offered through Columbia's Paris and Venice programs and the School of Professional Studies Summer Sessions will also satisfy the language requirement.

Non-native English Speakers

For information about the American Language Program (ALP) and Writing Center, see *University Resources* later in this handbook.

Registration & Course Information

Registration Classifications

Residence Unit (RU)

In order to graduate, all students must accumulate 2 Residence Units (RUs). A Residence Unit is the basic classification of registration for students who are currently enrolled in courses at the University. Registering for a full RU classifies students as full-time for the duration of the semester regardless of their actual course load.

Students registered for **1 RU** in any given semester may take four or more courses; additional tuition is charged per point if students register for more than 20 points of credit (unless specific courses require additional fees).

Students registered for $\frac{1}{2}$ **RU** in any given semester may take up to three courses and students registered for $\frac{1}{4}$ **RU** in any given semester may take up to two courses.

Extended Residence (ER)

MA students who have completed the required **2 RUs** must register for Extended Residence (ER). Students in ER are allowed to take up to 20 points of credit a semester.

Students holding a visa must register for a full Residence Unit or Extended Residence to maintain their visa status.

RU and ER Registration Procedure

The registration procedure for Residence Units and Extended Residences is the same as for online course registration, described later in this handbook.

Continuous Registration Requirement

Students in all degree Programs are required to register in each semester until all degree requirements have been completed or until the time-to-degree limit has been reached. Students are exempt from the requirement to register continuously only when granted an official leave of absence by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' Office of Student Affairs.

Withdrawals with Intent to Return

Withdrawals with intent to return allow students to interrupt their studies temporarily for compelling reasons, with the expectation of resuming their studies once the term of the withdrawal is completed. Students on an official withdrawal with intent to return are exempt from the continuous registration requirement. Information is available at:

<https://www.gsas.columbia.edu/content/withdrawals-intent-return-withdrawals-and-reinstatement>

Advising

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor upon entrance to the Program. Advisors are responsible for supervising and approving students' curriculum. Because of the importance of making appropriate and well-informed decisions, it is vital for students to keep in communication with their advisor. Questions about requirements not addressed in this handbook may be addressed to the MA in Art History Program Director, Director of Graduate Studies, or Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs.

Advisor and Registration

At each registration period, students should consult with their advisor to discuss and obtain approval of their coursework for the coming semester. The MA in Art History Program Director can also offer guidance.

Course Registration Procedures

There are currently three different periods during which students may register for courses and registration status. Registration for incoming GSAS students usually occurs in early August.

- Advance registration for continuing students takes place in the middle of April for the fall semester and at the end of November for the spring semester.
- Normal Registration takes place during a three-day period at the beginning of each semester.
- Late Registration (Change of Program period) occurs during the first two weeks of classes (the Registrar may assess a late fee during this period if registering for tuition category).

Online course registration procedure

To register for courses for which they can register online, students should take the following steps:

- Determine registration appointments by logging on to Vergil at:
<https://vergil.registrar.columbia.edu>
This requires a university network ID (UNI), which is assigned by the Registrar's Office.
- Consult Vergil or the online Directory of Classes
(<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/home.html>) for five-digit registration call numbers and course numbers necessary for the online registration process.
- Register online by logging on to Vergil during their registration appointments.

Waitlist system

For the following courses, students should add themselves to the waitlist through Vergil; then the instructor will approve them, thus completing the registration process:

- Core Graduate Courses (MA Colloquia).

- Bridge and graduate seminars. Prior to adding themselves to the waitlist for bridge (4000-level) and graduate seminars (8000 level), students must fill out an application. Applications are accepted through Vergil.

Other procedures

- 2000-level lectures taken at the 5000-level. Students who wish to take a 2000-level lecture must get the instructor's approval to take it at the 5000-level, either for a letter grade (which commonly involves additional course assignments) or for R-credit. Once approval is given, **students must have the instructor sign the Undergraduate Lecture Agreement Form** available on the Department's website at: <https://arthistory.columbia.edu/content/ma-art-history-handbook-planning-sheets-and-forms>. The signed form should be submitted to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs, who will then instruct students on how to register online for the 5000-level course. **Students should not register for 2000-level courses online.**
- Undergraduate seminars (3000-level) and independent research (9000-level). Please consult with the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs.
- For more complicated registration processes such as cross-registration between Columbia schools after the change of program period, students should review the Registrar's website for [detailed instructions](#) on adding and dropping courses after the change of program

Additional information about registration procedures is available at:
<http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/registration-and-enrollment#registering>
 and
<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/registration>

Questions about registrations procedures should be directed to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs.

Adding and dropping courses after registration

Students may add and/or drop courses through Vergil, without penalty, during the change of program period (i.e., the first two weeks of classes for the fall and spring semesters). Students are not charged tuition for courses dropped during this time, and dropped courses do not appear on their transcript.

After the change of program period, students may continue to add or drop courses through Vergil until the final deadline to add or drop a course (consult the Academic Calendar for the deadline). Courses may be added during this time only with the instructor's approval. Courses dropped during this time are charged at full tuition but do not appear on students' transcript.

Consult <http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/dropping-courses> for details on adding and dropping courses after the change of program.

Not attending classes or sending a notification to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course. Students who stop attending a course without formally dropping it by the deadline will be assigned a letter grade based on the same criteria as students who complete the course.

R-credit

R-Credit (Registration Credit) allows a student to attend a lecture and participate in class without being assigned a qualitative grade. Students are expected to attend each class and complete any written assignments required by the instructor for R credit. Students are given the registration grade of “R” to indicate satisfactory completion. Rules for incompletes apply also to R-credit courses.

- Before electing to take a course for R credit, students should first consult the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs to ascertain that the course will count toward their degree requirements. They should also confer with the instructor of the course to obtain permission to take the course for R credit and complete the [R-Credit Approval Form](#). At this time, students should discuss any specific assignments the instructor may have in lieu of regular E-credit course requirements. Requests for R credit can be made any time from the start of the semester until the eleventh week of classes
- R credit falls under “Letter Grade” in Vergil. Students register for the class per normal registration procedures. Upon instructor approval, students should submit the signed R-credit approval form to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs.
- Up to two approved R-credit courses can counted toward a student’s degree requirements, as dictated by the Program requirements.
- Students cannot retroactively change a course to R-credit. Any course where the assigned grade is an Incomplete cannot receive a grade of “R” if the student did not obtain approval to enroll for “R.”

Additional information about R-credit is available at:

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/grading-system#r>

Incompletes

Accumulation of Incompletes is strongly discouraged. On rare occasions, students who have met all the requirements for a course but need additional time to finish a major research project, for exceptional reasons satisfactory to the instructor, may request an Incomplete. Students who accumulate more than one Incomplete at any time, per GSAS guidelines, are no longer in good academic standing.

In all cases, students should work to resolve all Incompletes as soon as possible in order to remain in good academic standing, as explained here: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/good-standing>.

For a course in the Arts and Sciences, if the student does not submit the outstanding work by the deadline specified below, the mark of IN will be changed to an F, which will not be subject to change at a later date.

For Incompletes earned in the fall semester, the deadline for students to submit their outstanding work is the June 30 that immediately follows. For Incompletes earned in the spring semester or summer term, the deadline for students to submit their outstanding work is the December 30 that immediately follows. NB: Departments and instructors may set an earlier deadline for completion of the outstanding work; in such cases, that deadline will supersede the GSAS deadline. Leaves of absence approved by GSAS stop the clock on Incomplete deadlines.

Additional information about Incompletes is available at: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/grading-system>

Academic Records

Office of the University Registrar

The Office of the University Registrar keeps official University records of students. Students can access this information by logging on to Vergil. Information listed on Vergil does not constitute official documentation.

Receiving Grades

Students may obtain their grades by logging on to Vergil. Grades are accessible through Vergil within two days after the instructor informs the registrar of the final grades. Grades are obtained by these means only.

Changing Grades

Incomplete or incorrect grades (resulting from clerical errors, etc.) may only be changed by instructors.

Transcripts

Transcripts are issued by the Registrar's Office and should be ordered through Vergil. Details are available at: <https://registrar.columbia.edu/content/transcripts>

Student Contact Information

Most University offices utilize addresses and telephone numbers listed on Vergil. Students should inform both the Department and the Registrar's Office of any address and telephone changes. Addresses and phone numbers may be changed on Vergil, but the Department should be informed in person or in writing.

Academic certification

An academic certification is an official document provided by the Registrar's Office verifying dates of attendance, award of degree, and/or student status (full-time or part-time) by semester. It is typically requested for health insurance, visa, employment, or credit verification purposes. There is no fee for this service. Details on how to obtain an academic certification are available at: <http://registrar.columbia.edu/content/certifications>

Course Categories

2000- and 3000-Level Courses: Undergraduate Lectures and Seminars

2000-level courses are undergraduate lectures and 3000-level courses are undergraduate seminars. They tend to be rather general and introductory. Undergraduate lectures (2000-level) may be open to graduate students (see *Course Requirements* earlier in this handbook), while undergraduate seminars (3000-level) are generally closed to graduate students. MA in Art History students wishing to enroll in undergraduate seminars should contact the instructor. If permission is granted, please complete the [Undergraduate Lecture Agreement Form](#) found on the department website and submit it to the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs. This should be completed within the first two weeks of classes.

4000-Level Courses: Bridge Lectures and Seminars

4000-level courses are either bridge lectures or bridge seminars. They are intended for mixed constituencies of graduate students and advanced undergraduate students. Contribution to a bridge lecture may not be as demanding as in a bridge seminar, although they do require significant term papers and/or examinations.

5000-Level Courses: MA Only Courses

5000-level courses are for MA students only. Students in the MA in Art History Program are required to take two 5000-level courses: the MA Methods Colloquium and the Practices of Art History Colloquium (see *Course Requirements* earlier in this handbook).

6000-Level Courses: Graduate Lectures

6000-level courses are primarily for graduate students. Contribution to a graduate lecture may not be as demanding as in a graduate seminar, although they do require significant term papers and/or examinations.

8000-Level Courses: Graduate Seminars

Graduate seminars are more intensive and demand more of students. Enrollment in seminars is limited. All seminars include discussion and reports by students. Requirements will vary, but students should expect to complete a substantial research project to receive credit.

Independent Research

Independent research courses may be taken by students seeking to work on specific research projects or art historical problems. Independent research courses must be supervised and graded by a faculty member.

Independent research courses are recorded at the 9000-level courses and count as seminars toward the degree.

- The GR9001 independent research course may function as a tutorial in a specific area not otherwise covered by courses in a given semester. Students may use such courses to explore a field and/or the state of research or a specific topic, under the supervision of a faculty member.

- The Department offers advanced research courses in specific subject areas (e.g., GR9200 “Problems in Greek & Roman Art”), which are supervised by faculty in the relevant field. These courses will be entered into the system once the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs is requested to do so by the student or faculty member.
- Students may coordinate other independent research courses directly with the faculty member with whom they wish to study. The Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs must be informed.

Grading Options

There are two basic types of course credit in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Letter Grade

Letter Grade is the default credit classification for taking a course. Students taking a class for a Letter Grade are required to do all the work described in the course syllabus and meet attendance policies. Students are assigned a qualitative letter grade once all requirements for the course are completed.

R-Credit

R-credit (Registration Credit) allows a student to attend a lecture, or occasionally a seminar, and participate in class without being assigned a qualitative grade. It confers credit for registration and appears on official transcripts. Students are expected to meet attendance requirements for the class and are given the registration grade of R to indicate satisfactory completion. Should there be written assignments required by an individual instructor, students should keep in mind that such work will not receive a letter grade. However, rules for Incompletes apply even to R-credit courses.

For more information on R-Credit, see *Course Registration Procedures* earlier in this handbook.

Pass/Fail

Courses taken for Pass/Fail do not count toward the degree.

Resources

Departmental Resources

Department Office

The Department office, located in 826 Schermerhorn Hall, includes the offices of the Chair, the Departmental Administrator, the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs, the Undergraduate Program Coordinator, the Financial Coordinator, and the Administrative Manager. There is also an adjoining conference room where departmental meetings take place.

Faculty mailboxes are located in the Department Office.

The Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs coordinates activities such as graduate registration, seminar applications, graduate student record keeping, and admissions.

The Media Center for Art History

The Media Center for Art History is located in 824 Schermerhorn Hall. For more information, please visit: <https://learn.columbia.edu>

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery aims to contribute to Columbia University's long-standing tradition of historical, critical, and creative engagement in the visual arts. Modeled on a laboratory, the gallery presents exhibitions and related programming that reflect the diversity of interests and approaches to the arts at Columbia and embody the University's high standards for research and instruction.

Operating under the auspices of the Department of Art History and Archaeology, the Gallery was established in 1986 through the generosity of Miriam and Ira D. Wallach. Since that time, many exhibitions covering a broad range of art-historical periods and styles have been initiated by the Gallery, with graduate students, faculty, and other scholars serving as curators.

The Wallach Art Gallery is located in the Lenfest Center for the Arts, 615 West 129th street (enter from West 125th street). For more information, please visit: <https://wallach.columbia.edu>

Fora and Special Series

Three faculty Fora offer occasional lectures and receptions to bring outside scholars to campus and create a community of scholars in the metropolitan area. Consult the Department website for upcoming events of the *Robert Branner Forum* (Medieval Art and Architecture), the *Howard Hibbard Forum* (Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture), and the *Collins/Kaufmann Forum* (Modern Architecture). For more information on the Fora and Special Series, please visit: <https://arthistory.columbia.edu/events>

Miscellaneous Student Resources

Graduate Student Government

Students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences are represented by two councils, both of which facilitate communication between graduate students and the Columbia administration through meetings with Carlos J. Alonso, Dean of GSAS and Vice President for Graduate Education. For more information, please visit: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/student-life-well-being/graduate-student-government>

Graduate Student Lounge

The Graduate Student Lounge in the Stronach Center is available for quiet study, meeting, and relaxation for members of the Department. This room is frequently used for departmental receptions and houses graduate student folders and bulletin boards. The lounge is located on the east end of the eighth floor of Schermerhorn Hall, is open to students during regular Department Office Hours.

E-Mail

Graduate Students receive departmental and general information via their Columbia University emails. Please remember to notify the Asst. Director of Graduate Student and Faculty Affairs of any address change.

Bulletin Boards and Display Cases

Bulletin boards in the hallway outside the Department office announce the upcoming University and Department sponsored lectures, events, etc., events held in New York, as well as internship and study abroad postings. A bulletin board in the office posts announcements received by the Department of current art historical, archaeological, and curatorial job searches.

University Resources

Libraries

Columbia University is among the nation's top 10 largest academic library systems, with holdings of over 7.5 million volumes, 67,400 currently received serial titles and archives, manuscripts, electronic resources, videos, and microfilms. The collections are organized into 22 libraries, each generally supporting a specific academic or professional discipline.

Library services, including borrowing privileges, are available to all currently registered students, faculty, and staff. Reading privileges are available to alumni. Privileges are also available to spouses and domestic partners of students.

Library items obtained since 1981 are catalogued in CLIO: <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog>
For information on library services and resources, contact the Library Information Office (LIO) in 201 Butler Hall (tel. 854-7309).

Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library

Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library collects books and periodicals in architecture, historic preservation, art history, painting, sculpture, graphic arts, decorative arts, etc. Most of these materials are non-circulating and must be used within the library. The library contains over 250,000 volumes and receives 1,500 periodicals. The drawing and manuscript collection holds over 400,000 drawings and original records.

In addition to Columbia Libraries, the many collections and libraries of New York City provide opportunities for further study and research. Students have free access to most of these. In several, such as the Watson Library of the Metropolitan Museum, the Frick Art Reference Library of the Frick Collection, the Museum of Modern Art, and the New York Historical Society, special facilities are available for students.

Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT)

Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT) provides Columbia students, faculty, and staff with central computing and communication services, including email. CUIT also manages an array of computer labs and provides a variety of technical support services.

For more information, please visit: <https://cuit.columbia.edu>

Discounts on Computer Purchases

Columbia University has special arrangements with Dell and Apple for computer purchases. In order to take advantage of the discounts offered by these companies, students will should meet with the Department Financial Coordinator.

American Language Program

The American Language Program (ALP) provides wide-ranging, high-quality academic courses in English as a Second Language. Founded in 1911, ALP is one of the oldest English-as-a-Second-

Language Programs in the United States, offering a carefully integrated sequence of courses to students who wish to improve their command of English.

For more information, please visit: <http://sps.columbia.edu/alp>

Writing Center

The Writing Center is open to any person directly affiliated with Columbia University. The Center's approach is to attend to both the short-term goal of improved papers and the long-term goal of improved writing, critical thinking, and reading skills.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core-curriculum/undergraduate-writing-program/writing-center>

GSAS Writing Studio

The GSAS Writing Studio, which opened in September 2018, is dedicated to supporting Arts and Sciences graduate students in the process of writing dissertations and MA theses. For more information, please visit: <https://www.gsas.columbia.edu/content/gsas-writing-studio>

Career Development: GSAS Compass

GSAS Compass is a recent initiative in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences that offers a variety of career development services tailored to master's and doctoral students, including career development workshops, employer events, networking opportunities, and one-on-one advising.

For more information, please visit: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/career-development>

Appendix A: Part-time Graduate Work Guidelines

If you have been offered a position—even if it’s outside the Art History Department—please consult with the Administrative Manager or the Director of Academic Administration and Finance, before you accept the position and start working. We need to make sure that funds are available, you have the correct work authorization, and you are set up correctly in the payroll system to get paid on time.

- ❖ Full-time MA and PhD students are eligible to work an average of 20 hours/week during the academic year. If you are a PhD student on an instructional appointment (i.e. Teaching Fellowship) you may not spend more than 20 hours/ week on responsibilities associated with your fellowship *and* those associated with any other activity within or outside Columbia for which you are compensated. If you hold a Dissertation Fellowship or a first-year Dean’s Fellowship (which have no service responsibilities) you may spend up to ten hours per week on non-fellowship activities.

Graduate student part-time work can be administrative (getting books from library, copying and scanning, organizing payments etc.) or research-related (field-specific research, compiling bibliography, corresponding with museums, etc.) In the Department of Art History and Archaeology compensation starts at \$20/hour and is commensurate with skills and experience.

- ❖ Full-time MA students who are US citizens or permanent residents may be eligible for Federal Work Study. Interested MA students must contact GSAS Office of Financial Aid to determine eligibility, and must complete additional documents with the Federal Work Study Office. In the Department of Art History and Archaeology Work Study compensation starts at \$15/hour and is commensurate with skills and experience.
- ❖ During break periods –winter break, spring break, and summer break—students on appointment may work a maximum of 20 hours/week. Short term hires (i.e. Casuals and Work Study) may be eligible to work more hours. Please see the Administrative Manager or the Director of Academic Administration and Finance for more information.
- ❖ The Department encourages faculty supervisors and graduate student hires to prepare a memo of understanding with each other before starting work. This should include a brief description of the responsibilities, pay rate, and timeline, and periodic check-ins. The Administrative Manager or the Director of Academic Administration and Finance are happy to help with this.

Visa Holders

The allowable hours may vary for Student Visa Holders, please confirm with the International Students and Scholars Office about the hours you are allowed to work.

Helpful Links

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/teaching/teaching-and-research-appointments>

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/studentofficers.html>

<https://isso.columbia.edu/content/campus-work-f-and-j-students>

<https://humanresources.columbia.edu/content/student-casual-employees>

<https://sfs.columbia.edu/content/work-study-overview>

Appendix B: Teaching Assistant Positions

In exceptional occasions, MA in Art History students may have the opportunity to work as Teaching Assistants for an undergraduate lecture. There are two types of teaching positions.

A **Reader/Grader (RG)** works with the professor grading undergraduate work and generally assisting in the smooth running of the course.

A **Section Leader (SL)** is responsible for two sections of a large lecture course, including weekly discussion meetings and grading.

Only MA in Art History students in their second year who have completed the majority of their degree requirements are eligible for these positions.